



Bisexual Women's Female Friendships: Predictors and Outcomes of Sexual Identity Disclosure

Nina Parekh
University of Maryland, College Park

Introduction

- Friendships are vital for bisexual individuals, who often experience poorer mental health than heterosexual individuals or other sexual minority individuals (Ia Roi et al., 2019).
- The process of developing and maintaining friendships with other women can be complicated by the potential for rejection and marginalization among monosexual individuals (Brewster & Moradi, 2010; Mohr et al., 2016).
- Bisexual people of color are even more severely impacted by stereotypes, cultural expectations, and minority stressors (Cyrus, 2017), partly because they must contend simultaneously with racism in sexual minority communities and heterosexism in their racial-ethnic communities (Ghabrial, 2017).
- In fact, research indicates that an adherence to Asian values and internalized heterosexism are positively correlated (Szymanski & Sung, 2013).
- Sexual orientation disclosure can serve to deepen trust and intimacy in relationships and thus strengthen interpersonal bonds (Jackson & Mohr, 2016), but because the act of disclosure can carry many risks many LGB individuals only choose to disclose their sexual minority identity when they perceive it as likely to be well received by the other party (Beals et al., 2009).

Present Study

This study aimed to:

- Identify potential characteristics of disclosure motivation based on similarity of gender and/or racial identity
- Identify outcomes of disclosing one's sexual orientation to their female friends of varying identities
- Identify outcomes of disclosing one's sexual orientation on their personal sense of wellbeing.

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Hypotheses

Possible Predictors of Sexual Identity Disclosure

Sexual Orientation

- More likely to have disclosed their sexual minority status to friends who also identify as bisexual
- Less likely to have disclosed to heterosexual and lesbian friends.

Racial/Ethnic Identity

Asian participants

- Less likely to disclose to Asian monosexual friends
- More likely to their friends who do not identify as Asian

White participants

- Will likely not display a difference in disclosure or concealment of sexual minority status towards friends of various ethnic groups.

Possible Outcomes of Sexual Identity Disclosure

Individual Outcomes

Disclosure of a bisexual woman's sexual minority identity is likely to lead to increased wellbeing.

Interpersonal Outcomes

Among their friends to whom a participant has disclosed their sexual minority status, they may experience stronger levels of interpersonal wellbeing.

Methods

- Participants were recruited from LGBTQ community/student organizations and online groups, including those directed at LGBTQ Asian communities.
- Participants were required be over 18 years of age and to self-identify as female and bisexual, as well as, White, East Asian, Southeast Asian, or South Asian.
- Analyses of over 200 bisexual women are currently taking place.

Measures

Individual Wellbeing

Self-Esteem: The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965)

Self-Authenticity: The Authenticity Scale (Wood et al., 2008)

Satisfaction with Life: Satisfaction with Life Scale (Diener et al., 1985)

Perceived Social Support: The Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (Zimet et al., 1988)

Interpersonal Wellbeing

Level of Outness: The Outness Inventory (Mohr & Fassinger, 2003)

Validation: The Perceived Partner Responsiveness Scale (Reis & Carmichael, 2006)

Trust: The Dyadic Trust Scale (Larzelere & Huston, 1980)

Intimacy and Overall Satisfaction: The McGill Friendship Questionnaire (Mendelson & Aboud, 2014)

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